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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/653,922	09/04/2003	Akio Inage	32307-192654	3782

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EXAMINER

THOMPSON, HUGH B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3634

DATE MAILED: 10/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/653,922

Applicant(s)

INAGE, AKIO

Examiner

Hugh B. Thompson II

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9-4-03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claim 1, lines 6, 9, and 13, the applicant has positively recited the combination of the device and the sliding door, specifically, the closing operation, manual operation, and holding of the sliding door in the locked state. Is the door and its associated operations required?

With respect to claim 2, the applicant has positively recited the combination of the vehicle body (base plate), and the device. Is the base plate of the vehicle body required? Claim 3 recites a similar ambiguity with respect to the actuator that drives the door. Claim 4 recites a similar ambiguity with respect to the latch hole provided on the door.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Stojc #6,712,406. Stojc, as recited in column 2, lines 19-36, column 4, lines 1-7, and column 5, lines 53-58, discloses a sliding door for a transit vehicle having an automatic solenoid locking mechanism 70 and manual locking mechanism 31, 48, 49, 68, 69, both mechanisms secured to common member 74.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 3-5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim, any intervening claims, and rewritten to overcome the Section 112 ambiguities as noted above.

The primary reason for the allowable subject matter of claim 3 is the inclusion of a switch connected with the manual operation that turns off power to an actuator that drives the door. For claim 4, it is the inclusion of the latch mechanism having a bar received within a hole provided on the door, and the unlatching means and latch holding means, as disclosed on page 16 of the specification. The prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the claimed features absent the applicant's own disclosure.

### ***Conclusion***

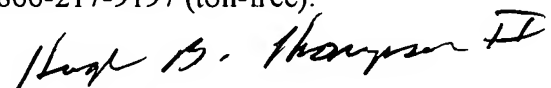
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Heffner et al #6,739,092, Stojc et al #6,688,042, Inage #6,662,500, Reddy #6,009,668, Bozorgzadeh et al #5,894,911, and Reddy #3,745,705 are cited to teach lock assemblies for vehicle sliding doors.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hugh B. Thompson II whose telephone number is (703) 305-0102. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 9 am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Cuomo can be reached on (703) 308-0827. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Hugh B. Thompson II  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3634

October 15, 2004

HUGH B. THOMPSON II  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600